

**Draft Summary of the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group Meeting  
Oroville Facilities Relicensing (FERC Project No. 2100)  
June 27, 2002**

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) hosted a meeting for the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group on June 27, 2002 at the Loafer Creek Day Use Area of Lake Oroville State Recreation Area (Oroville, CA). Many of the participants brought pot-luck appetizers and salads to share.

A summary of the discussion, decisions made, and action items is provided below. This summary is not intended to be a transcript, analysis of the meeting, or to indicate agreement or disagreement with any of the items summarized, except where expressly stated. The intent is to present a summary for interested parties who could not attend the meeting. The following are attachments to this summary:

Attachment 1	Meeting Agenda
Attachment 2	Meeting Attendees
Attachment 3	Flip Chart Notes
Attachment 4	Guidance for Study of Cumulative Impacts and Impacts on Species Listed Under the Federal Endangered Species Act
Attachment 5	Lake Oroville Recreation Survey (Onsite)
Attachment 6	Lake Oroville Recreation Survey (Onsite – Windshield)
Attachment 7	Lake Oroville Recreation Survey (Mail-Back – Resident)
Attachment 8	Lake Oroville Recreation Survey (Mail-Back – Non-Resident)

## **Introduction**

Attendees were welcomed to the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group meeting. Attendees introduced themselves and their affiliations and the desired outcomes of the meeting were discussed. The meeting agenda and list of meeting attendees are appended to this summary as Attachments 1 and 2, respectively. Meeting flip chart notes are included as Attachment 3.

## **Action Items – April 25, 2002 Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group Meeting**

A summary of the April 25, 2002 Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group meeting is posted on the relicensing web site. The Facilitator reviewed the status of action items from that meeting as follows:

<b>Action Item #R48:</b>	Research the potential to re-allow public parking along the dam road, and potential to re-open the overlook parking lot.
Status:	The Work Group was informed that DWR reviewed these public access issues and decided to continue the restriction on public parking along the dam road into the foreseeable future and to keep the overlook parking lot closed to the public (except during special events). Both decisions are based on public safety and national security concerns. It was noted that FERC is requiring a security assessment for all FERC-licensed hydropower facilities to be completed by 2003.
	The Work Group discussed the potential of transferring the overlook parking lot property to private interests. DWR has considered this possibility and noted that the transfer of property to private interests is a multi-step process. One participant suggested the idea of developing a restaurant as a potential future land use. Potential land uses within the project study area will be evaluated in the Land Use studies.

**Action Item #R49:** Update Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group on Memorial Day holiday data collection efforts.

Status: EDAW field staff provided the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group with an update on survey data collection efforts. The details on the survey process was provided under a later agenda item (see below)

### **Cumulative Impacts Approach / ESA Task Force Update**

The Facilitator reported on the Cumulative Impacts Approach/ESA Task Force efforts to develop a guidance document to assist study plan authors in the preparation of appropriate study plans to address cumulative impacts and ESA issues. She explained that although the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) had participated in the Task Force meetings until the last one, they decided that they were not comfortable with some of the language included in the draft and would not continue their involvement in the Task Force efforts to finish the document. She reported that both FWS and NMFS committed to submitting separate letters containing their ESA and cumulative guidance within 30 days.

While the other Task Force participants were in general agreement with the language contained in the draft, the Facilitator explained that they agreed there was little to gain in continued editing but instead would release the document in its current form to assist other work groups and study plan authors in preparing draft cumulative impacts and ESA effect study plan tasks.

The Facilitator explained that the draft document is being distributed to all of the work groups and they may choose to adjust the draft guidance to suit their individual needs as long as the changes are not inconsistent with the draft document. If inconsistencies arise within the individual work groups that cannot be resolved there, the issue will be brought to the Plenary Group for resolution. The Guidance for Study of Cumulative Impacts and Impacts on Species Listed Under the Federal Endangered Species Act document was distributed to the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group participants and is provided as Attachment 4 to this summary.

### **Preliminary Results – Memorial Day Weekend**

John Baas with the consulting team provided a general introduction of the survey process to date. The consulting team is using a team of eight field interviewers, who are administering multiple surveys across multiple sites and user groups.

The specific details of the surveys were provided by two field-team researchers, Mike Madsack and Niki Holcomb and by the field office administrator, Cathi Abrams. Four surveys have been developed for this project: (1) onsite-direct (see Attachment 5); (2) onsite-windshield (see Attachment 6); (3) mail back resident (see Attachment 7); and (4) mail back non-resident (see Attachment 8). During the Memorial Day weekend, 143 on-site surveys were collected. In total, 736 surveys have been collected to date; of these, 684 were direct surveys and the remaining 52 represent “windshield” surveys that were left on vehicles and completed by users during their visit. Of the 736 on-site surveys, 676 provided their addresses to participate in the mail-back survey. Of these 676, approximately 375 are considered residents (zip code in Butte County) and the remaining 300 are considered non-residents (zip code outside of Butte County). Of the non-resident surveys completed, roughly 85 to 90 percent are associated with residents of Sutter and Glenn counties. Overall, the returns exceed the goal of 600-700 surveys to be completed by the end of June 2002. In general, the response/interest in the survey process has been high.

One participant inquired whether the surveys would be available on the Internet. Samples of the actual survey forms will be made available as part of this meeting summary; the results of the surveys will ultimately be used to develop a recreation plan for the relicensing application.

The Work Group inquired about the general response to the surveys by the respondents. Many respondents commented on the length of the survey, but agreed to fill it out. In fact, Mike reported that recreation users have even approached the survey team requesting to fill out surveys.

While conducting the surveys, the survey team generally allowed people to be onsite for at least 30 minutes prior to administering the survey. The randomness of the survey process is achieved by using random sampling dates, not through the people selected to take the survey. All users are approached to take the survey, but only one person per family/group is allowed to complete the survey.

One participant raised the issue that surveys do not represent a standardized set of questions for all user groups. Although there are several standardized questions for selected user groups, not all groups are asked the same questions. The design and content of the surveys are a result of the collaborative process in which the Recreation and Socioeconomics Task Force and Work Group participated. After the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group completed the survey during its April 2002 meeting, the consultant team reviewed and considered all Work Group comments in revising the surveys.

The phone survey commenced on June 24, 2002, and is being administered by a separate phone survey firm. In order to participate in the survey, the potential respondents must have recreated three times on a lake within the past year. This screening process was developed to focus on individuals that are familiar with lake recreation needs and interests. Phone numbers of households are selected randomly to select survey participants.

### **Interim Projects Update**

Tom Glover with DWR provided the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group an update on interim projects. Interim projects are organized into four categories (Category 1, 2, 3 and 4) ranging from the easiest to implement (Category 1) to those projects that require substantial study (Category 3) and others that are considered ongoing (Category 4).

In total, there are 23 interim projects. Category 1 includes 12 projects, all of which have started. Category 2 includes three projects, of which one has started. None of the five projects in Category 3 have begun. Three projects are considered Category 4 projects; two out of three Category 4 projects have started.

In general, the interim projects process is somewhat behind the anticipated schedule due in part to the retirement of the previous DWR project manager in charge of interim projects. It has been difficult to find a replacement due to the State hiring freeze and other considerations. The goal is to have a new hire in charge of interim projects by August 2002.

The Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group discussed what the best process might be to receive updates on the progress of interim projects. The participants agreed that either a monthly written update and/or quarterly/bi-annual briefing to be prepared by the prospective project manager would be adequate. Tom Glover agreed to provide updates to the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group until such time as a new project manager is hired.

### **Potential for Field Observation by Participants**

Several Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group participants inquired at previous meetings if there will be the potential to observe the survey team during the implementation of surveys. Opportunities are limited due to the fact that shifts and sites vary continuously. In addition, there are concerns that respondents may alter their responses if observed by more than just the interviewer. Nevertheless, arrangements for limited observation opportunities may be considered.

All requests would need to be coordinated through the respective Resources Area Managers (RAMs; in this case Doug Rischbieter) as directed by Rick Ramirez.

### **Other Issues**

Several Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group participants raised the issue of multi-use trails at the end of the meeting, which led to a discussion on this issue. Several participants had concerns on how this decision was made by DPR and felt that it should have been made as part of the collaborative effort associated with the relicensing process. The Facilitator indicated that DPR's decision is an existing license issue, not a relicensing issue. She explained that while she understood that some participants have concerns with the decision itself, with how the decision was made and a question of if DWR was non-compliant by not first presenting the proposed change to the recreation advisory committee established by FERC order, she reminded the group that this is not the proper forum to resolve those issues. Anything that occurs between now and when the new license application is filed or granted should be discussed under the context of the existing FERC license. She also reminded the group that early in the collaborative process the group agreed to abide by certain groundrules, one of which is to stay focused on the relicense of the Oroville Facilities. The collaborative process has the potential to develop a recreation plan more suited to the needs of the recreation community for the term of the next license period and would address trail needs within that plan.

The group was reminded of a trails plan developed by the JPA that was submitted to the consulting team for consideration. John Baas indicated that the JPA trails plan would be considered once the recreation survey work was completed and the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group began to develop appropriate protection, mitigation and enhancement measures (PM&Es) to be included in the new license application. He also noted that the trails issue and JPA plan will be evaluated under SP-R17.

### **Next Steps**

Based on the implementation schedule for the various recreation/socioeconomic study plans, the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group agreed to cancel the July 2002 meeting. The next regularly scheduled meeting is on August 22 (Kelly Ridge Golf Course Meeting Room, 6 pm to 10 pm). A project GANTT chart is expected to be available so that the work groups can begin scheduling their review of project deliverables. In addition, preliminary survey data results may be available by the August 2002 Work Group meeting.

### **Agreements Made**

1. The Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group agreed to cancel its July 2002 meeting.

### **Action Items**

The following list of action items identified by the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group includes a description of the action, the participant responsible for the action, and item status.

**Action Item #R50:** Review the Cumulative Impacts Approach/ ESA guidance document for discussion at a future Work Group meeting.

**Responsible:** Work Group

**Due Date:** August 22, 2002